

## **Collection Development**

Our Mission: To be the heart and gathering place of our Hill Country community, where anyone of any age may embark on a lifelong journey of learning and find the information they need to spark imagination and encourage curiosity.

### **OBJECTIVE**

An objective of the library is to provide free and open access to the ideas and information available on all subjects and in various media. The library shall select, organize, and preserve materials, and make them freely and easily available for enlightenment, cultural development, and enjoyment, which will assist the public in pursuit of education, information, research, and recreation. A goal of the library is to facilitate the maximum use of its collection by the greatest number of members of the community.

### **CLIENTELE**

The users of the Patrick Heath Public Library comprise a diverse group. To meet the needs of the community, the library makes every effort to provide some material for all the groups it serves.

Clientele includes students, homeschoolers, families, professional people, educators, children, young adults, retirees, and visitors across the socioeconomic, religious and political spectrum. The library strives to maintain awareness of, and anticipate shifts in, demography. Materials are selected to reflect these shifts as well as changes in educational, cultural, and intellectual patterns, the mobility of the population and the impact of new technology.

### **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

In its selection of books and other materials, the Patrick Heath Public Library affirms that the freedom to read is essential to our democracy. The library subscribes to the principles adopted by the American Library Association (ALA) in its Library Bill of Rights (Appendix 1), Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix 2), and Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors (Appendix 3).

### **CHALLENGE TO MATERIALS**

The library believes in freedom of information for all and does not practice censorship. The selection of library materials is predicated on the patron's right to access materials for education and recreation and similarly, his freedom from censorship by others. The library recognizes that many items are controversial and

any given item may offend some person. However, selections for the library will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the material in relation to the building of the collection and to serving the interests of the library user.

The library holds censorship to be a purely individual matter and declares that while anyone is free to reject books and other materials of which he/she does not approve, he/she may not exercise censorship to restrict the freedom of others.

Responsibility for materials selected and read by children and teenagers rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to minors. The library does not indicate through the use of labels or other devices particular philosophies outlined in an item. Labeling establishes in a reader's mind a judgment before the reader has had the opportunity to examine the item thoroughly.

No items are sequestered except to protect them from damage or theft.

The Patrick Heath Public Library Advisory Board recognizes that the collection of diverse materials may result in some complaints or requests for reconsideration. Procedures have been developed to assure that complaints are handled in a consistent manner. (See: *PROCEDURES FOR REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS FORM*)

## **PROCEDURES FOR REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

When a patron wishes the library to remove or reclassify a book or other material, he or she fills out the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form. Reconsideration forms are available from any of the service desks in the library. The complainant should be advised to prepare full, written information giving the nature of the complaint and justification for the withdrawal of the material. The material in question will remain in use until completion of the reconsideration process.

- a. The form is sent to the Library Director, who then requests that the Adult Services Librarian, Young Adult Services Librarian or the Youth Services Librarian review the material to determine if the material meets the selection criteria established by the guidelines for collection development. Staff reviewers will not receive a copy of the "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form and do not know the name of the patron requesting reconsideration.
- b. The librarians will review the material and send their recommendation as well as professional reviews of the material to the Library Director.
- c. The Library Advisory Board will receive a copy of the complaint (without the patron's name) in their packet at the next meeting after the reconsideration form has been received.

- d. The Library Director will review the material and the recommendations, reviews, and circulation history and make a decision regarding the disposition of the challenged item.

1. If the Director's decision is to retain the material:

- a. The Library Advisory Board will be notified of the decision at the next meeting after the decision is made.
- b. The Library Director will notify the patron of the decision in writing.
- c. If the patron is not satisfied with the decision to retain the material, the patron may request in writing that the Library Advisory Board review the material.
- d. The chair of the Library Advisory Board will request a committee of at least three board members to review the material. Any board member may serve on the review committee upon request. The chair of the board will set a deadline for completion of the committee's review.
- e. The members of the board committee will report to and make a recommendation to the full Library Advisory Board.
- f. The Library Advisory Board will make a decision following the committee's report and recommendation.
- g. The Library Director will notify the patron in writing.
- h. If the patron is not satisfied with the decision of the Library Advisory Board, he/she may elect to pursue the matter with Boerne City Council, whose authority is final.

2. If the Director's decision is to remove the material:

- a. The Library Advisory Board will receive all items related to the decision in their packet prior to the removal of the material.
- b. If the Library Advisory Board agrees with the decision, the Director will notify the patron of the decision in writing.
- c. If the Library Advisory Board disagrees with the decision, the material will be retained.
- d. The Library Director will notify the patron of the decision in writing.
- e. If the decision is to remove the material, the Library Director will collect and discard all copies of the material.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

Final responsibility for the selection of all books and other materials rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Advisory Board and the City of Boerne. However, the responsibility for initial selection of books and other materials is shared by every professional member of the staff, since no one person is fully qualified to determine the reading needs of all persons in all sectors of the community. Primary responsibility for the selection of adult materials rests with the Adult Services Librarian, the selection of young adult materials rests with the Young Adult Services Coordinator, and primary responsibility for the selection of youth materials rests with the Youth Services Librarian.

## BASIC SELECTION CRITERIA

The library strives to maintain a balance between quality materials and materials of a high demand nature. Titles are selected on the basis of the content as a whole and without regard to the race, nationality, or political or religious views of the writer. Slightly different criteria are used in the selection of adult non-fiction, adult fiction, children's materials, young adult materials, reference materials, periodicals, audio-visual materials, and electronic materials.

For assistance in selection, the staff refers to reviews in such publications as the American Library Association's *Booklist*, *Kirkus Reviews*, the *Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, and the *New York Times Book Review*. Non-review media, such as publisher's announcements and advertisements are used to help determine demand. Reading lists from local schools and various community groups are used to augment the collections.

Advice of specialists in the local area may be requested where staff members need more expertise. In addition, suggestions from patrons are welcomed and given serious consideration. Patrons may make suggestions through our catalog interface, via email, in person with staff or through a materials suggestion form, available at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor circulation desk.

For children and young adult materials in particular, the yearly Newbery Medal Nominees, the Caldecott Award Nominees, the Texas Library Association's Bluebonnet Award Nominees, and entries from the Texas Library Association's Lone Star Reading List, the *School Library Journal*, and various other publications are considered. Young adult criteria also include VOYA Magazine, *Booklist* and the Michael L. Printz Award Nominees.

*Adult Nonfiction.* Collected at the study level, the chief points considered are readability of material, authenticity and accuracy of factual matter presented, quality of writing, cost of the item and value in relation to price, format, technical quality of binding, print, illustration and design, timeliness, demand and interest in the topic,

existing library holdings, and suitability of material to the community. Nonfiction may be excluded for inaccurate information, lack of integrity, sensationalism, intent to incite hatred and intolerance, and text material too limited or specialized in nature. In case of controversial questions, variety and balance of opinion are sought whenever available.

Local subject interests are emphasized in the collection. Special attention is given to books and other materials of use and value to parents, teachers, and other adults working with children.

*Adult Fiction.* Fiction titles by English language authors are acquired, usually at the basic level, to satisfy the need of the general reader. Other languages are represented selectively in translation.

Selection of adult fiction is made with reference to one or more of these criteria:

1. It should contribute positively to the individual's awareness of self, community, and social heritage.
2. It should contribute to the value of the library's collection as a whole by representing all types and styles of literature.
3. It should provide pleasure reading for recreation and the creative use of leisure time.

Other criteria to be considered include, but are not limited to, plot, characterization, originality, description of a place or time, literary merit, and significant contribution. Serious works that present an honest aspect of life are not necessarily excluded for frankness of expression.

Because we feel that the library patron is an important part of the selection process, the individual request of a patron for a title is thoughtfully considered if the request conforms to selection and directional guidelines outlined in this policy. Hardback is the chosen format, with trade paperbacks selected only for replacement copies or when the title is not available in hardback.

The library recognizes that certain items have high demand upon publication and accommodates that demand by purchasing multiple copies of a title and monitoring donated materials to help meet reserve demand levels. In deciding whether or if to order multiple copies of an item, consideration is given to the length of time a book might be in demand and the wear of those books through the high demand time period.

*Children's Materials.* Both fiction and non-fiction titles are collected at the basic level. The first objective is to encourage the child's joy in reading and in being read to. Books and other materials that offer adventures of mind and spirit to the growing child are selected, cultivating an appreciation of literature both oral and written. Each book is judged on its own merits and is considered also in relation to the collection as a whole and in relation to the children for whom it is intended.

Special attention is paid to illustrations, physical qualities, size of print, and vocabulary development, cultural awareness and timeliness.

When available, books with library bindings are chosen over trade bindings. Duplication of titles in board book format is desirable when appropriate for the age group. Duplications are also considered for popular titles and seasonal/holiday themes.

Attention is given to the replacement of older standard juvenile materials. Books that are recognized as children's classics and which are of considerable literary merit are retained in the collection even though they may contain certain words or episodes that are sometimes today found "politically incorrect."

The collecting of paperbacks, spiral-bound, pop-up, and books with interactive games and puzzles is discouraged, although these, along with the big-book format, are considered for purchase for the library's professional collection.

*Young Adult Materials.* Both fiction and nonfiction titles are collected at the basic level. The first objective is to provide age-appropriate reading material and information on contemporary issues to older youth. The second objective is to encourage older youth to continue or to begin a love of reading by offering popular and updated materials for educational, cultural and informational purposes. In addition to the other selection criteria, graphic novels are also acquired based on popularity and demand. While some material in the young adult section deals with mature subject matter, the library strives to provide topical information that may assist a young adult's whole development.

*Reference Materials.* The reference collection is largely a part of the circulating non-fiction collection of materials designed to provide access to factual information at the study level. They are selected to satisfy the research and reference needs of library users with a wide variety of interests and educational needs. Factors considered in the selection of reference materials are authority, reliability, scope, treatment, arrangement, format, cost, publication date, and existing holdings. A small collection of non-circulating reference books is maintained at the upstairs information desk.

Since many reference materials are now readily available through online subscription databases or interlibrary loan, we order only a minimal number of physical items.

*Periodicals.* Popular, general information, and scholarly magazines are selected at the basic level to supplement the book collection, bring book information up to date, and fill in those areas where book resources are weak, inferior, or non-existent. Several professional library journals are collected to aid in

the selection process. Acquisitions are placed through a periodical subscription service when possible.

Newspapers are selected to meet reference and research needs of patrons, to provide current information, and to satisfy casual interest in current events. Local, state and national newspapers are supplied upon sufficient demand and within budget and space limitations. Online access to newspapers and sufficient coverage of topical global events are also taken into consideration.

As more and more periodicals become available electronically, an annual review of these formats is indicated. Space constraints limit archives to one year for Boerne-area newspapers. Back issues, and/or articles, of most newspapers and periodicals are readily available electronically or through interlibrary loan.

*Audio-Visual Materials.* The objective of the audio-visual collection is to provide entertaining, instructional, and cultural materials that serve the interests of the greatest number of users. Materials selection shall be guided by previews, published reviews, availability, newer technologies, and recommendations from library staff, volunteers, and/or patrons.

The materials selected shall be of permanent or timely value, communicate information effectively, be of good technical quality, be entertaining and/or informative in nature, provide accurate current information, be appealing to a cross-section of viewers, and/or have been favorably reviewed in appropriate journals.

In accordance with ALA's Freedom to View Statement (Appendix 4), materials shall not be rejected solely on the basis of moral, religious, or political content. Selection of a work does not constitute an endorsement by the library of the point of view presented.

Audio books are acquired in CD, MP3, readalong and downloadable formats through donations or purchases. Visual materials are acquired in DVD, Blu-ray and downloadable formats. Streaming options are also considered.

*Electronic Materials.* The library provides downloadable/streaming eBooks, audio-books, and videos through paid subscriptions, either as part of a consortium or through exclusive subscriptions. Extensive online databases are available from the Texas State Library and through library subscriptions. Computer software is not collected for public use at this time.

## **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

*Government Publications.* The Patrick Heath Public Library is not an official depository for United States government documents. Most government titles,

however, are available freely online. An effort will be made to obtain useful print government documents, especially those that are free of charge.

Some basic Internal Revenue Service tax forms will be made available to the public during tax season. Forms for the current year, and one year prior, can also be accessed through the official IRS website.

*Dietert Historical Archives.* The purposes of these collections are to preserve primary and secondary sources of local, regional and Texas history and to provide information and materials for family history research. The library recognizes the expertise of existing local genealogy and historical associations and makes every effort not to duplicate materials.

The library, through its local history collection, preserves books and materials that document the history of Boerne and Kendall County and provides a record of current happenings in the community

Computerized cemetery records are also available in the library. Volunteers make corrections, additions, and input new burial records.

*Large Print Books.* The library acquires large print materials selectively or by subscription at a basic level to meet the needs of visually impaired readers.

*Literacy Materials.* For the general public, high-interest, low-reading-level paperbacks are selected by library staff for regular circulation. The literacy collection is maintained at levels that are adequate to support one-on-one tutoring, independent study, and English as a Second Language classes.

*Non-English Materials.* Spanish-language materials in various formats are collected for all ages, . Materials for the study of other major foreign languages are included in the language sections of the library. Online foreign language programs are also available through library subscriptions.

*Bilingual Materials.* English/Spanish bilingual books are purchased at the minimum level.

*Paperbacks.* Purchases of paperbacks in mass-market format are discouraged, although purchases are permitted to replace lost or damaged books, when multiple copies are needed for book discussions and special programs, or when a title is not available in another format. The library accepts donations of mass-market paperbacks for all age groups. This collection is not cataloged and is made especially available to library visitors who do not hold a Patrick Heath Public Library card.

*Rare Books.* Additions to the non-circulating rare book collection are chosen from gifts with subject matter pertinent to the local area or Texas. No selections are made for purchasing and no public funds will be applied to the purchase of rare



books. Gift materials are accepted out of scope when they are suitable for exhibit purposes or when they add to existing strengths.

*Texana.* Materials in this area will be collected and maintained with special attention given to local history and local authors. Selection is based on earlier stated criteria with hardbound copies preferred, although trade paperbacks are chosen when hardbacks are not available.

*Textbooks.* The Patrick Heath Public Library does not attempt to acquire textbooks or other curriculum-related materials, except as donations.

## **INTERLIBRARY LOANS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

So that every individual in the community has access to the widest variety of resources, the library has access to materials through an interlibrary loan system. Please refer to the library's Interlibrary Loan policy for a more thorough explanation.

## **GIFT MATERIALS**

The Patrick Heath Public Library encourages monetary gifts not earmarked for specific titles in order to permit the most flexible use of the donation for the enrichment of the collection.

Please refer to the library's Gift Acceptance and Donor Recognition policy for a more thorough explanation.

## **DUPLICATION, REPLACEMENT, AND REPAIRS**

When justified by demand, multiple copies shall be provided. Timeliness and permanent value are considered for all types of materials.

The library does not automatically replace all books that are withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear. Standard items that are missing or damaged beyond repair are replaced periodically. Less standard items are replaced according to demand. Damaged items may be repaired using approved library repair materials. Rebinding is considered as an alternative if materials are out-of-print, or too expensive to replace or repair.

## **EVALUATION**

The purpose of a collection evaluation is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the collection, to show its level of comparison with both qualitative and quantitative standards, and to determine areas that need development or weeding.

Realizing that there are several methods for evaluation and that each method has its limitations, the library will use primarily three different methods to evaluate the collection on an on-going basis. Continual evaluation will take place by library staff through the usage method since it is recognized that the adequacy of the collection is directly related to its use by the community. Because circulation statistics provide a reasonably representative picture of library use, circulation figures will be maintained with daily, monthly, and yearly figures being compiled and analyzed.

The impressionistic method of collection evaluation will be employed based on an understanding of this library and the specific needs of the community through personal observation.

The checklist method will be used on a limited basis, with subject collections recommended by the Texas State Library or basic recommended lists.

## **WEEDING AND DISCARDING MATERIALS**

In order to maintain a vital, interesting, and usable collection, the Patrick Heath Public Library, following the guidelines from the Texas State Library's *CREW Manual*, continually removes from its collection items that through usage or the passage of time are no longer suitable for use or are no longer necessary. Special attempts are made to retain materials chronicling local history, writings by local authors and books with local settings. Back issues of Boerne newspapers are kept for one year; others are discarded after two weeks. The following criteria will be used when considering other materials for withdrawal:

1. *Books of poor content.* This applies to such materials as those with outdated information, trivial subject matter, mediocrity of writing, false information, unused volumes of sets, repetitious series, and superseded editions. Unneeded duplicate titles as well as superfluous books in subject fields in which the community has little interest will also be removed.
2. *Books of poor appearance.* This includes worn out books (yellowed or brittle paper, mutilated or missing pages, frayed bindings, broken backs, dingy or dirty covers), badly bound and printed editions (small print, shoddy binding, dull print, cramped margins, poor illustrations, pulpy paper through which the print shows), and sets whose antiquated appearance discourages use.
3. *Volumes no longer in use.* If a title has not circulated for three years, has not to the librarian's knowledge been used in the library for reference purposes, and is not a standard title, it may be suitable for discarding. Even classics, if unused because of unattractive appearance, should be replaced with better editions. For liability reasons, outdated materials dealing with legal/medical issues will be discarded and/or replaced with updated editions.

## **DISPOSITION OF DISCARDED MATERIALS**

After materials have been withdrawn, they may be disposed of in one of three different ways:

1. *Gifts to other organizations.* Materials in good condition which are found to be inappropriate for the collection, no longer needed, or of a special research nature, may be given to other organizations.
2. *Book sales.* Outdated, damaged, or worn materials that may be of interest to others will be donated to the Friends of the Boerne Public Library, which runs a used book store adjacent to the library and participates in online sales throughout the year. The Friends of the Boerne Public Library uses proceeds from such sales for the benefit of the library. Materials not sold will be disposed of at the discretion of the Friends of the Boerne Public Library.
3. *Discards.* Materials of very limited use to the general public, materials in very poor physical condition and outdated materials dealing with legal/medical issues are recycled.

This Collection Development policy will be reviewed one year from date of adoption or revision.

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Carol Green, Chair, Patrick Heath Public Library Advisory Board

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Kelly Skovbjerg, Director, Patrick Heath Public Library

**Attachments to Policy:**

- a. Library Bill of Rights (Appendix 1)
- b. The Freedom to Read (Appendix 2)
- c. Free Access to Libraries for Minors (Appendix 3)
- d. Freedom to View Statement (Appendix 4)
- e. Request for Reconsideration of Books or Other Materials (Form)

Last revision: February 11, 2016  
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## **Library Bill of Rights (Appendix 1)**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

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Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

A history of the Library Bill of Rights is found in the latest edition of the [Intellectual Freedom Manual](#).

Although the Articles of the Library Bill of Rights are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as [Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

## The Freedom to Read Statement (Appendix 2)

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance

is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

## **Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors (Appendix 3)**

### **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

#### ***(formerly titled "Free Access to Libraries for Minors")***

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users violate the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the *Library Bill of Rights* states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, games, software, and other formats.<sup>1</sup> Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.<sup>2</sup> Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and



guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.

Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

*Note*

1. See *Brown v. Entertainment Merchant's Association, et al.* 564 U.S. 08-1448 (2011): a) Video games qualify for First Amendment protection. Like protected books, plays, and movies, they communicate ideas through familiar literary devices and features distinctive to the medium.. And 'the basic principles of freedom of speech . . . do not vary' with a new and different communication medium."

2. See *Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205 (1975): "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors." See also *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S.503 (1969); *West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); *AAMA v. Kendrick*, 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

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Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 *under previous name* "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; and July 1, 2014.

## Freedom to View Statement (Appendix 4)

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the [First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States](#). In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

**Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council**

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION  
OF LIBRARY MATERIALS \*

MATERIAL:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPLAINT INITIATED BY:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you initiating this complaint on behalf of any group? If so, which group?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Explain why you object to this material. Please cite specific pages and/or passages, if relevant. Are your objections moral, political, religious, or aesthetic?  
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3. How was the item brought to your attention?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What have you heard or read about the material? What was the source of the information about this item?

5. What do you feel might be the result of reading/viewing this material?
6. Did you read/view the entire material? (If not, tell which parts were read/viewed.)
7. What do you believe is the theme of this material? Is there anything good about the material?
8. Are you aware of the judgment of this material by professional critics? Have you read reviews of the material?
9. For what age group would you recommend this material?
10. What would you like the library to do about this material?
11. What material of equal literary quality would you recommend in this material's place that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?

*\* Entire form must be completed to be considered.*